

Message Text

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ACTION H-03

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: OREP (WOLFF, LESTER)
SUBJECT: CODEL WOLFF: PROPOSED TOAST

1. THE FOLLOWING IS A PROPOSED TOAST TO BE DELIVERED BY CONGRESSMAN WOLFF AT THE DINNER HOSTED BY THE SPEAKER OF THE LOK SABHA (LOWER HOUSE OF PARLIAMENT) ON JANUARY 17. (THIS TOAST IS IN REPLY TO THAT OF THE SPEAKER.)
2. TEXT: MR. HEDGE (HEG-DAY), SPEAKER OF THE LOK SABHA, MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, FRIENDS:
3. MR. HEDGE, MY COLLEAGUES AND I WOULD LIKE YOU TO KNOW HOW MUCH WE APPRECIATE YOUR KIND WORDS AND YOUR WARM WELCOME. WE ARE GRATEFUL TO YOU FOR HAVING DELAYED YOUR DEPARTURE FROM DELHI TO HOST THIS WONDERFUL DINNER AND CONSIDER OURSELVES HONORED BY YOUR GESTURE.
4. FOR US IN THE AMERICAN CONGRESS THE SPEAKER'S INVITATION TO VISIT INDIA WAS MOST WELCOME, AS WE CONSIDER THE MEMBERS OF THE INDIAN PARLIAMENT AND OURSELVES TO BELONG TO A COMMON FRATERNITY OF LEGISLATORS. WHILE THERE ARE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN OUR TWO SYSTEMS OF GOVERNMENT, IT IS CLEAR THAT AT ROOT THEY REST ON COMMON PRINCIPLES. IT FALLS TO US, AS THE ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES OF OUR PEOPLES, TO ENSURE THAT GOVERNMENT TRULY IS BY THE PEOPLE AND FOR THE PEOPLE. IT IS THIS

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PAGE 02 NEW DE 18537 281226Z

SHARE BACKGROUND WHICH LEADS US TO BELIEVE THAT OUR CONVERSATIONS HERE WILL BE PARTICULARLY MEANINGFUL.

5. AMONG THE MANY THINGS FOR WHICH CHURCHILL IS REMEMBERED IS HIS OBSERVATION THAT DEMOCRACY IS THE WORST SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT IN THE WORLD "EXCEPT ALL OTHER SYSTEMS." TODAY AS NATIONS ENCOUNTER GREATER DIFFICULTIES IN RESOLVING THEIR

PROBLEMS, WHETHER THEY BE PROBLEMS OF UNEMPLOYMENT, INFLATION, OR POVERTY, THE TEMPTATION INCREASES TO ABANDON REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT FOR MORE AUTHORITARIAN METHODS. THE ARGUMENT IS HEARD THAT TODAY'S PROBLEMS ARE TOO DIFFICULT AND TOO PRESSING TO PERMIT OF DEMOCRATIC SOLUTIONS. WITH YOUR PERMISSION I WOULD LIKE TO SUGGEST A FEW REASONS WHY OUR FAITH IN DEMOCRACY IS STILL JUSTIFIED.

6. FIRST, I AM NATURALLY SUSPICIOUS OF ANY SYSTEM WHICH OFFERS A FAST FIX. CHANGE MADE IN HASTE IS TOO OFTEN CHANGE FOR THE WORSE. DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT DOES ALLOW US TO EXPERIMENT, TO BE CREATIVE IN FINDING BETTER WAYS TO SOLVE OUR PROBLEMS. BY ENSURING THAT A CHANGE IS TRULY SUPPORTED BY THE PEOPLE'S REPRESENTATIVES, THE ODDS ARE GREATER THAT THE CHANGE WILL REALLY BE AN IMPROVEMENT.

7. AND SECONDLY, I WOULD SUGGEST THAT RECENT HISTORY, IN YOUR COUNTRY AS IN MINE, INFORMS US THAT DEMOCRACY IS VERY CAPABLE OF INTRODUCING CHANGE. ONE SHOULD ALWAYS QUESTION WHETHER THOSE WHO ARGUE THE CONTRARY DO SO BECAUSE THEY HAVE NOT BEEN ABLE TO SEE CHANGE TAKE PLACE ALONG THE LINES THEY DESIRE.

8. WHILE ARGUING THAT CHANGE IS VERY MUCH COMPATIBLE WITH DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT, I WOULD CONCEDE THAT AT ROOT DEMOCRACY IS ALSO CONSERVATIVE. IT IS CONSERVATIVE IN THE SENSE THAT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 NEW DE 18537 281226Z

THE PROVEN WISDOM OF THE PAST AND THE VALUES AND IDEALS OF THE PEOPLE ARE GIVEN THE RESPECT OWED THEM AND NOT SACRIFICED ON ANY ALTAR OF EXPEDIENCY. WHILE VARIOUS NON-DEMOCRATIC FORMS OF GOVERNMENT MAY MAKE SIMILAR CLAIMS, I WOULD SUGGEST THAT THE VIRTUE OF DEMOCRACY IS THAT IT DENIES TO ANY ONE INDIVIDUAL OR GROUP THE RIGHT TO DEFINE THE VALUES AND IDEALS FOR THE ENTIRE NATION.

9. OUR MISSION IN INDIA IS TO LEARN MORE ABOUT YOUR COUNTRY AND TO EXCHANGE IDEAS. WE BELIEVE THAT PERSONAL CONTACT, HOWEVER BRIEF, AT LEAST SUGGEST AREAS OF UNDERSTANDING NOT OTHERWISE POSSIBLE. WE HOPE THAT OUR INDIAN FRIENDS WILL ALSO FIND OUR VISIT HERE USEFUL. WE COME HERE IN THE BELIEF THAT ALTHOUGH OUR COUNTRIES ARE DISTANT, THEY INTERACT IN MANY IMPORTANT WAYS. TODAY, MORE THAN EVER BEFORE, THERE IS A GROWING RECOGNITION AMONG NATIONS THAT ONLY BY WORKING TOGETHER CAN THEY SOLVE THEIR PROBLEMS. MY COLLEAGUES AND I FIRMLY BELIEVE THAT IT IS IN THAT SENSE THAT THE STRENGTHENED RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES HAS ITS DEEPEST MEANING.

10. LADIES AND GENTLEMEN; IT IS TO THIS NEW SPIRIT OF INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AND TO THE FRIENDSHIP OF THE INDIAN

AND AMERICAN PEOPLES THAT I ASK YOU TO RAISE YOU GLASSES.

11. THANK YOU. END TEXT.
GOHEEN

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